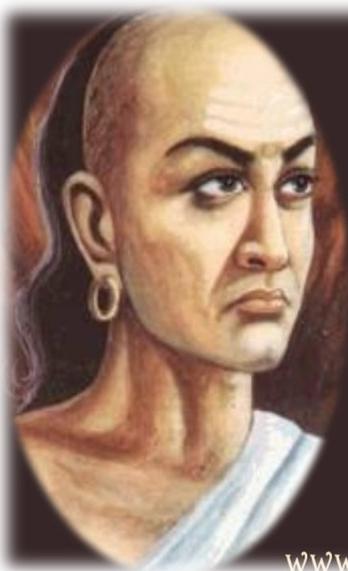


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"There is no austerity equal to a balanced mind, and there is no happiness equal to contentment; there is no disease like covetousness, and no virtue like mercy.

Chanakya

[www.motivatamazebegreat.com](http://www.motivatamazebegreat.com)

**375 BCE <:::><:::><:::> 283 BCE**

**ISBN:978-81-982285-0-5**

Compiled by:  
**Prof Dr S Ramalingam**



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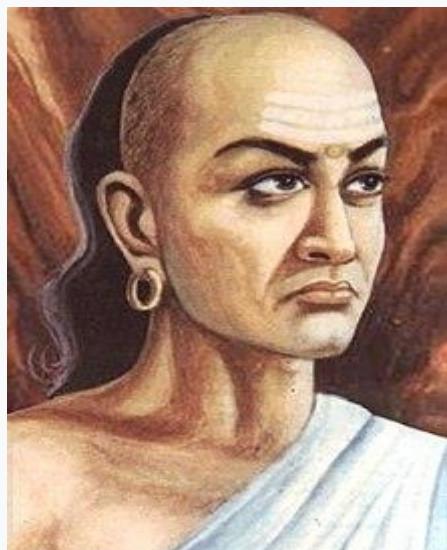
375 BCE



283 BCE

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya>

Acharya  
**Chanakya**



Chanakya as depicted on the cover of [R. Shamastry's](#) 1915 translation of [Arthashastra](#)

<b>Born</b>	375 BCE, Chanaka village in Golla region, <a href="#">South India</a> (Jain legends); <sup>[1]</sup> or in <a href="#">Takshashila</a> (Buddhist legends) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Died</b>	283 BCE, <a href="#">Pataliputra</a> , <a href="#">Maurya Empire</a>
<b>Occupation(s)</b>	<a href="#">Teacher</a> , <a href="#">philosopher</a> , <a href="#">economist</a> , <a href="#">jurist</a> , <a href="#">chief advisor</a> and the <a href="#">Prime Minister</a> of the Chandragupta Maurya Empire
<b>Known for</b>	Prominent role in the foundation of the <a href="#">Maurya Empire</a> <a href="#">Arthashastra</a> <a href="#">Chanakyaniti</a>
<b>Predecessor</b>	Position established
<b>Relatives</b>	Chanak (father)

**Chanakya** (ISO: *Cāṇakya*, pronunciation; 375–283 BCE) was an ancient Indian polymath who was active as a teacher, author, strategist, philosopher, economist, jurist, and politician. He is traditionally identified as **Kauṭilya** or **Viṣṇugupta**, who authored the ancient Indian political treatise, the *Arthashastra*, a text dated to roughly between the fourth century BCE and the third century CE. As such, he is considered the pioneer of the field of political science and economics in India, and his work is thought of as an important precursor to classical economics. His works were lost near the end of the Gupta Empire in the sixth century CE and not rediscovered until the early 20th century. Around 321 BCE, Chanakya assisted the first Mauryan emperor **Chandragupta** in his rise to power and is widely credited for having played an important role in the establishment of the **Maurya Empire**. Chanakya served as the chief advisor and Prime Minister of the both emperors **Chandragupta Maurya** and his son **Bindusara**.

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# Chanakya

<https://www.worldhistory.org/Kautilya/>

## Author



Joshua J. Mark

Joshua J. Mark is co-founder and Content Director of World History Encyclopedia. He has lived in Greece and Germany, traveled extensively, especially through Egypt, and presently lives in upstate New York with his dog, Sammie. Mark was a part-time philosophy professor and writing instructor at Marist College, where he received a Faculty of the Year Award and the Special Services Award of Merit, and has also taught history and literature courses at the college level. He has published articles, short fiction, and creative nonfiction through various journals, magazines, and online.

**Note:** This article has been reviewed by our editorial team before publication to ensure accuracy, reliability and adherence to academic standards in accordance with our [editorial policy](#).

**Chanakya** (l. c. 350-275 BCE, also known as Kautilya and Vishnugupta) was prime minister under the reign of **Chandragupta Maurya** (r. c. 321-c.297 BCE), founder of the **Mauryan Empire** (322-185 BCE). He is best known as the author of the political treatise ***Arthashastra*** which he wrote as an instruction manual for the young **Chandragupta** on how to rule effectively.

The events of his life are known only through legends from various traditions; no historical documents have survived concerning him or his role in the establishment of the Mauryan **Empire**. According to one tradition, he served as advisor to the last king of the Nanda Dynasty (c. 5th century -322 BCE) Dhanananda (also given as Dhana Nanda, r. 329-322/321 BCE) who ruled the Kingdom of **Magadha**. According to another, he was a Vedic scholar from the university of **Taxila** who visited the court of Dhanananda where he was insulted at an alms-giving ceremony and, after this event, devoted himself to deposing the king.

He first attempted to enlist the king's son, Pabbata, in his cause and is also said to have approached others before narrowing his most likely candidates down to Pabbata and a young man who was either a lesser member of the noble house or a commoner, Chandragupta. After testing the two youths, Chandragupta proved the most resourceful and Chanakya focused his efforts on training the future king for the next seven-to-nine years. When his training was completed, Chandragupta overthrew Dhanananda and assumed control of Magadha.

The *Arthashastra* is considered Chanakya's training manual by which he transformed Chandragupta from a citizen to a monarch. The precepts of the *Arthashastra* not only enabled Chandragupta to seize power but to maintain it, passing it down to his son, Bindusara (r. 297-c.273 BCE) and then to his grandson **Ashoka the Great** (r. 268-232 BCE) whose initial success can also be attributed to the *Arthashastra* until he grew disillusioned by **war** and converted to **Buddhism**. The *Arthashastra* is informed by the philosophical school of **Charvaka** (developed c. 600 BCE) which rejected the supernatural explanation of phenomena in favor of a completely materialistic world view. The practical, hands-on, nature of the *Arthashastra* most likely could never have developed without the foundation of Charvaka to build on.

The *Arthashastra* continued to exert considerable influence after the reign of **Ashoka** but then disappeared and was considered lost until it was discovered in 1905 CE by the **Sanskrit** scholar Rudrapatna Shamastry (l. 1868-1944 CE). Shamastry published the work in 1909 CE and then translated it into English and published that version in 1915 CE which brought it greater attention.

Since that time, the work has continued to be studied as one of the greatest pieces of political **science** ever written, frequently compared to *The*

*Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527 CE) whose treatise on how a Renaissance prince should comport himself became as influential in European political science as the *Arthashastra* was in **India** over 1500 years earlier. The central message of *The Prince* – that a true leader is one who sees what needs to be done and is able to do it, regardless of so-called morals – informs the *Arthashastra* as well. It has also been compared with **Plato's Republic** and Sun Tzu's ***The Art of War*** as a manual for establishing and maintaining a strong State.

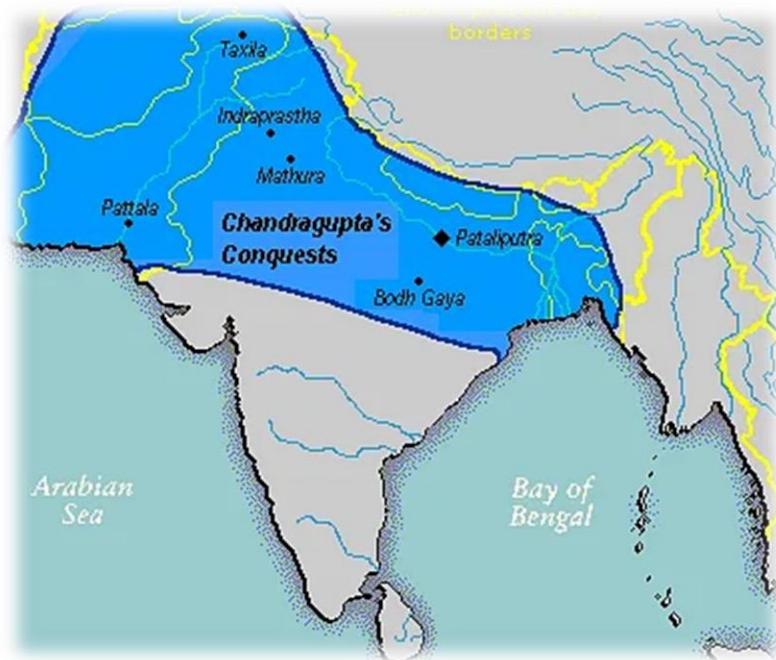
## Early Life & Revolt

There are no agreed-upon historical texts relating to Chanakya's life and work. Some scholars, in fact, have even challenged his authorship of the *Arthashastra*. Information on Chanakya's life, his role in the elevation of Chandragupta, and the creation of the *Arthashastra* come from legends which the scholar Thomas R. Trautmann has identified as:

- **Buddhist** Tradition - the text of the *Mahavamsa*
- Jain Tradition - the text of the *Parishistaparvan*
- Kashmiri Tradition - the text of the *Kathasaritsagara*
- Vishakhadatta's version - his play *Mudrarakshasa*

Of these, the Buddhist tradition is the earliest, but its content is developed by the later works which add or omit various details. The basic story, according to the Buddhist tradition, presents Chanakya as a Brahmin scholar from the university at Taxila who arrived at the court of Dhanananda for an alms-giving ceremony. Chanakya (in every version of his legend) had "canine teeth" which folk superstition interpreted as a sign of royalty. When he was a young man, his mother mourned the fact that he was destined to rule and would forget about her once he had become king. In order to allay her fears, he broke his teeth and was afterwards regarded as disfigured. He also seems to have been lame and, generally, of poor appearance.

He arrived at the ceremony and was waiting with the others when Dhanananda entered and insulted him, calling attention to his looks and demanding he be removed from the assembly. Chanakya cursed the king, who ordered his arrest, and then escaped to the surrounding forest where he plotted his revenge. He is said to have known of a method of multiplying wealth whereby he could turn one **coin** into eight. In the woods, he implemented this mysterious technique to create the hoard of **gold** coins he would require for an army to overthrow Dhanananda; what he lacked, however, was a man he could mold into a leader who would take Dhanananda's place.



**Chandragupta Maurya's Empire**

### Chanakya & Chandragupta

His first choice seems to have been Dhanananda's son Pabbata, though the boy could have been only one of many he considered, and then the youth Chandragupta. According to some versions of the story, Chandragupta was also of the Nanda family but not the royal line. In other versions, he was a commoner whose family had once been affluent but now were farmers who raised peacocks. Patel recognizes this latter version as legitimate, **writing**:

After being insulted and thrown out, Chanakya goes and finds a ten-year-old orphan farmhand called Chandragupta, and nine years later turns him into the first emperor of the largest Empire the region had ever seen. Not for nothing is it said that truth is stranger than fiction.

Whichever version is true does not finally matter because, in both, Chanakya transforms the young man into a powerful king. Before this could happen, however, he had to be sure of the characters of the boys whose destinies he was about to change. After he had narrowed his choices down to two, he gave Pabbata and Chandragupta each an amulet on a woolen thread which they were to wear closely around their necks. One day, when Chandragupta was sleeping, Chanakya told Pabbata to go to his room and remove the amulet without breaking the thread.

Pabbata returned empty-handed and admitted he had failed. Chanakya then required the same of Chandragupta on another day when Pabbata was sleeping. Chandragupta cut off Pabbata's head and returned to his master carrying the amulet. Chanakya had found his future king in that, by taking the most drastic and direct action in accomplishing the task,

Chandragupta had proven himself capable of rule in recognizing what had to be done and being able to do it.

### Political Landscape & Rise to Power

The region at this time was comprised of small kingdoms and tribes dominated by the Nanda Empire of the Kingdom of Magadha under Dhanananda but had been destabilized by the invasion of **Alexander the Great** in 326 BCE. Following the **Battle** of the Hydaspes River between **Alexander** and King Porus of Paurava (r. c. 326-315 BCE), Porus is alleged to have told Alexander he could easily topple the Nanda Empire because Dhanananda was so unpopular with the people and they would support his campaign.

According to the later **Roman** historian Curtius (l. 1st century CE), Alexander's men knew Dhanananda as Xandrames or Agrammes, a mighty king who could easily field 200,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry in addition to **chariot** units and war elephants. Alexander's army had already endured great hardships following their general to India and now refused to go up against an army which was considered invincible. They threatened mutiny and forced Alexander to abandon his campaign and return to **Mesopotamia**.

According to legend, Chandragupta met Alexander at this time and requested leave to serve in his army. According to **Plutarch** (l. c. 46-120 CE), the meeting did not go well, and Chandragupta fled from Alexander's camp in fear for his life. Although this might be possible, it is more likely that, with Chanakya's encouragement, Chandragupta offered his services to Dhanananda and possibly served in his army in order to gain military experience.

Chanakya is said to have spent between seven and nine years training Chandragupta, lessons which had to have included some form of military service, and then directed his protégé to the north-west region of India which Alexander's army had destabilized before leaving. Chandragupta easily defeated the small kingdoms and the tribes which had already been beaten by Alexander and established a base from which to launch his assault on Magadha. Chanakya assisted in the preparation for the attack through intrigue, spies, and political manipulation to weaken the opponent while gathering intelligence on his strengths. Chandragupta failed in his first attempt but, in 321 BCE, deposed and killed Dhanananda and assumed power.

### Charvaka & the Arthashastra

Once Chandragupta was installed as king, Chanakya became his prime minister. He may have composed the *Arthashastra* shortly afterwards but any claim regarding a specific date of composition is speculative. What is clear, however, is that the work could not have been written were it not for

the philosophical school of Charvaka which established the kind of intellectual landscape which allowed for it.

Charvaka rejected religious interpretations of existence in favor of materialism, stating its vision through six main tenets:

- Direct perception as the only means of establishing and accepting any truth
- What cannot be perceived and understood by the senses does not exist
- All that exists are the observable elements of air, earth, fire, and water
- The ultimate good in life is pleasure; the only evil is pain
- Pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain is the sole purpose of human existence
- Religion is an invention of the strong and clever who prey on the weak

The founder is thought to have been a reformer named Brhaspati (l. c. 600 BCE) who seems to have objected to the power of the priestly class and the hold they had over the people, especially the lower classes. He is said to have composed a text on his **philosophy**, the *Brhaspati Sutra*, which has long been lost and all that is known of the philosophy comes from later **Hindu**, Jain, and Buddhist texts which refute Brhaspati's claims.

Charvaka completely rejected the Hindu religious texts known as the **Vedas** which were believed by the orthodox to be the words of Brahman, creator of the universe and the Universe itself. Religious and philosophical schools which accepted the Vedas were known as *astika* ("there exists") while those who rejected the Vedic vision were known as *nastika* ("there does not exist"). **Jainism** and Buddhism are both considered *nastika* schools of thought but Charvaka, also *nastika*, took the concept further to deny any supernatural existence or authority whatsoever.

Although it never became a widely accepted school of thought, Charvaka offered the possibility of seeing the world in a non-religious, completely pragmatic, light. This new vision would allow for works like the *Arthashastra*, which blends *astika* and *nastika* schools of thought, to be written. Scholar P. Ram Manohar comments:

**The fact that the Astika school of thought dominated in India led to the emergence of a knowledge system that was**

predominantly spiritual in outlook, although this was supplemented with a scientific approach to understanding the mundane world. Amongst the Nastika schools, Buddhism and Jainism were well-codified and developed into organized establishments. It is pertinent to note that the Charvaka school...never became established as a predominant school of thought...But the Charvaka system of thought exerted a powerful influence and helped to achieve a balance between the spiritual and material worldviews. The Charvaka school ensured that the materialistic perspective found a legitimate place in the canvas depicting reality. (Paranjape, 5)

Materialism informs the Arthashastra in its focus on the here-and-now and how a king must sometimes make what appear to be difficult choices in order to rule effectively. The concepts the Arthashastra explores were certainly in use prior to Chandragupta's reign as they seem to have been integral to his success and most likely developed through a blending of astika and nastika thought. The precepts of Chanakya are all eminently practical while also acknowledging the existence of a higher power who approves of the king's necessary actions as his dharma (duty) which must be performed in accordance with his **karma** (action). Patel breaks the Arthashastra into seven broad categories all focusing on a king's success in foreign and domestic policy and what courses a monarch should be able and willing to pursue:

- **Strategy.** Chanakya's focus is on stable rule and relations with neighboring states. Much of the book is devoted to political, military, and secret strategy.
- **Subterfuge.** When classic or open strategy fails, there are always what Chanakya refers to as 'secret means'. Chanakya discusses poisons and instigated riots in the same way as he discusses the measurements for forts.
- **Spies.** There is a great deal in this book about spies, from courtiers to wandering lunatics. It is important to understand that Chanakya uses spies as information gatherers. In another era, there would be other ways of doing this; at the time of writing, salting spies throughout your **culture** was the only reliable way of knowing what was happening anywhere.
- **Bureaucracy and Fines.** An extensive part of the original document details the structure of government buildings and rules in minute detail, as well as specific offenses and fines, both civil and criminal.

- **Protection.** A ruler of any kind must be conscious of attacks, both against their person and against their position or kingdom.
- **Verification.** How do you know who you can trust? This is one of the central questions of governance and one that Chanakya devotes significant time to.
- **Attack.** How does one attack an enemy so that long term problems are avoided? How can one attack a stronger enemy or ascertain their real intention? (8-9)

These topics, and many others, are covered in the 15 books which make up the treatise of the *Arthashastra*. Chanakya guided Chandragupta's reign by these precepts and, in so doing, created one of the greatest and most powerful empires of the ancient world.

### Conclusion

Chanakya served his king until Chandragupta converted to Jainism and abdicated in favor of his son, Bindusara. According to legend, the king then retired to the forest to become a religious ascetic and died through ritual fasting. Chanakya, after ensuring that Bindusara's reign was stable, left him with the *Arthashastra* as a guide and is said to have also retired to the forest; after he leaves the Maurya court, according to all versions of his legend, nothing more is known of him.

Chanakya's work has sparked as much controversy over its morality - or the lack of it - as Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Chanakya can be seen as a soulless materialist who uses whatever is to his advantage to achieve his ends, or as an enlightened pragmatist who recognizes that one must sometimes engage in distasteful acts in order to achieve noble ends. It cannot be denied that the precepts of the *Arthashastra* enabled the founding and maintenance of the Mauryan Empire which superseded any in the region previously and this must be regarded as a positive, as Patel notes:

The influence of the Mauryan empire cannot be overstated in Indian history. It was the largest empire of all time and introduced the world to Buddhism. It created a stable political structure that, though it changed hands over time, more often than not led to a continuous lineage of thought and development. (13)

Whether seen as a hero or villain, Chanakya's influence and his *Arthashastra* made the Mauryan Empire possible but, at the same time, the work advocates for disregarding moral considerations in favor

of practicality and expediency. The Arthashastra continues to engage students of politics, religion, and philosophy in examination of this central problem which its concepts and influence present: can a positive result be regarded as objectively good if it is attained by negative means? Chanakya would no doubt answer in the affirmative but scholars who study his work seem inclined to stipulate, qualify, or even stop before fully agreeing with his vision.

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## Chanakya University

<https://chanakyauiversity.edu.in/about-chanakya-university/>

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## In Visual Media

### Plays

Several modern adaptations of the legend of Chanakya narrate his story in a semi-fictional form, extending these legends. In *Chandragupta* (1911), a play by [Dwijendralal Ray](#), the Nanda king exiles his half-brother Chandragupta, who joins the army of [Alexander the Great](#). Later, with help from Chanakya and Katyayan (the former Prime Minister of Magadha), Chandragupta defeats Nanda, who is put to death by Chanakya.

### Film and television

- The story of Chanakya and Chandragupta was portrayed in the 1977 Telugu film entitled *Chanakya Chandragupta*. [Akkineni Nageswara Rao](#) played the role of Chanakya, while [N. T. Rama Rao](#) portrayed as Chandragupta.<sup>[53]</sup>
- The 1991 TV series *Chanakya* is an archetypal account of the life and times of Chanakya, based on the *Mudrarakshasa*. The titular role of the same name was portrayed by [Chandraprakash Dwivedi](#).
- *Chandragupta Maurya*, a 2011 TV series on [NDTV Imagine](#) is a biographical series on the life of Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya, and is produced by [Sagar Arts](#). [Manish Wadhwa](#) portrays the character of Chanakya in this series.
- The 2015 [Colors TV](#) drama, *Chakravartin Ashoka Samrat*, features Chanakya during the reign of Chandragupta's son, Bindusara.
- Chanakya was played by [Chetan Pandit](#) and [Tarun Khanna](#), in the historical-drama television series *Porus* in 2017–2018.
- Chanakya was played by [Tarun Khanna](#), in the historical drama TV series *Chandragupta Maurya* in 2018–2019.

## *Chanakya Chandragupta*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya\\_Chandragupta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya_Chandragupta)

***Chanakya Chandragupta*** is a 1977 Indian [Telugu](#)-language [historical drama](#) film produced and directed by [N. T. Rama Rao](#) under the banner of [Ramakrishna Cine Studios](#). The film features [Akkineni Nageswara Rao](#), [N. T. Rama Rao](#), [Sivaji Ganesan](#), [Jayapradha](#), [Manjula](#) and [Kaikala Satyanarayana](#) in prominent roles, with music composed by [Pendyala Nageswara Rao](#).

The story focuses on the life of [Chandragupta Maurya](#), the founder of the [Maurya Empire](#), and his mentor, [Chanakya](#). *Chanakya*

*Chandragupta* is significant for featuring three legendary figures of Indian cinema—Akkineni Nageswara Rao, N. T. Rama Rao, and Sivaji Ganesan—and it achieved commercial success upon its release.

### Chanakya Chandragupta



Theatrical release poster

<b>Directed by</b>	<a href="#">N. T. Rama Rao</a>
<b>Written by</b>	<a href="#">Pingali Nagendra Rao</a> (dialogues)
<b>Screenplay by</b>	N. T. Rama Rao
<b>Story by</b>	N. T. Rama Rao
<b>Produced by</b>	N. T. Rama Rao
<b>Starring</b>	<a href="#">N. T. Rama Rao</a> <a href="#">Akkineni Nageswara Rao</a> <a href="#">Sivaji Ganesan</a> <a href="#">Jayapradha</a> <a href="#">Manjula</a>
<b>Cinematography</b>	Kannappa
<b>Edited by</b>	G. D. Joshi
<b>Music by</b>	<a href="#">Pendyala Nageswara Rao</a>
<b>Production company</b>	<a href="#">Ramakrishna Cine Studios</a>
<b>Release date</b>	• 25 August 1977
<b>Running time</b>	178 minutes
<b>Country</b>	India
<b>Language</b>	Telugu

[Visit the Web Link to watch the Movie \[2:58:16\]](#)

**Chanakya Chandragupta Telugu Full Length Movie**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7acR\\_16d4A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7acR_16d4A)

# Chandragupta (play)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandragupta\\_\(play\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandragupta_(play))

**Chandragupta** (Bengali: চন্দ্রগুপ্ত) is the last history play by Dwijendralal Ray, written in 1911. The play, set in ancient kingdom of Magadha, recounts how **Chandragupta Maurya**, with the help of his faithful minister **Chanakya**, ascended the throne of Magadha by defeating and subsequently killing his half-brother Nanda. It is one of the most popular plays by Ray. The story of the play is loosely borrowed from the **Puranas** and the Greek history.

## **Sources**

The play, as Dwijendralal Ray himself cited, was drawn from the Hindu **Puranas** (possibly the **Vishnu Purana**) and Greek history. The accounts of Chandraketu and Mura is loosely borrowed from **Sanskrit** play **Mudrarakshasa**. The love affair between Chandragupta and Chhaya as well as the sub-plot regarding the story of Antigonus is Ray's original thoughts.

## **Characters**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Nanda</b> – King of Magadha.</li><li>• <b>Chandragupta</b> – Nanda's half-brother, later Emperor of <b>India</b>.</li><li>• <b>Bachal</b> – Nanda's brother-in-law.</li><li>• <b>Chanakya</b> – A <b>Brahmin</b>, later Prime Minister of Chandragupta.</li><li>• <b>Katyayan</b> – Nanda's minister.</li><li>• <b>Chandraketu</b> – King of Malaya.</li><li>• <b>Sekendar Shah</b> – Greek Emperor.</li><li>• <b>Seleucus</b> – Greek Commander, later Greek King.</li><li>• <b>Antigonus</b> – a Greek Commander.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Helena</b> – Seleucus's later Empress of India.</li><li>• <b>Chhaya</b> – Chandraketu's sister.</li><li>• <b>Mura</b> – Chandragupta's mother.</li></ul> |
|--|---|

The characters Helena and Chhaya were created by **Roy**. Other characters appear in historical records or earlier legends, such as **Mudrarakshasa**.

## **Synopsis**

**Chandragupta**, the Prince of **Magadha**, after being overthrown and exiled by his half-brother Nanda, joined **Sekendar Shah**'s army where **Seleucus** taught him the art of warfare. Later, with the help of Chandraketu, the young king of Malay, **Chanakya**, the former Royal Priest and Katyayan, the former Prime Minister of Magadha,

Chandragupta defeated and overthrown Nanda who was later put to death by Chankya. Chandraketu's sister Chhaya fell in love with Chandragupta.

After Sekandar Shah's death, Seleucus became the emperor of Asia. He appointed Antigonus, an exiled Greek legionary, as the commander of his army. Antigonus fell in love with Seleucus's daughter Helena, who was already in love with Chandragupta, and was refused by both her and Seleucus, mentioning Antigonus was an illegitimate child. Antigonus went back to Greece and upon questioning his mother, learnt that he was a legal son of none but Seleucus himself.

Later, Seleucus attacked Magadha but was defeated. As a part of the peace treaty signed between Chanakya, new Prime Minister of Magadha and Seleucus, Chandragupta married Helena. Upon learning Chhaya also loved Chandragupta, Helena helped her to marry him, too. Antigonus comes back to India and declared that he is a legal son of Seleucus, and hence Helena's half-brother and the Chandragupta's brother-in-law.

### **Songs**

*Chandragupta* has eight songs, written and composed by Dwijendralal Ray himself. These are:

1. "Tumi He Praner Bnodhu" ("তুমি হে প্রাণের বঁধু") (Act I, Scene iii)
2. "Aay Re Basanta, Tor Kiran-Makha Pakha Tuli" ("আয় রে বসন্ত, তোর কিরণমাখা পাখা তুলি") (Act I, Scene iv)
3. "Jakhan Saghano Gagano Garaje Barashe Kadka Dhara" ("যখন সঘন গগন গরজে বরষে কড়কা ধারা") (Act III, Scene i)
4. "Aar Keno Michhe Asha, Michhe Bhalobasa, Michhe Keno Tnar Bhabana" ("আর কেন মিছে আশা, মিছে ভালবাসা, মিছে কেন তাঁর ভাবনা") (Act III, Scene v)
5. "Ghano Tamasabrito Ambaro Dharni" ("ঘন তমসাবৃত অস্ত্র ধরণী") (Act IV, Scene i)
6. "Aji Gao Mahageet" ("আজি গাও মহাগীত") (Act IV, Scene vi)
7. "Oi Mahasindhur Opar Theke Ki Sangeet Bhese Ase" ("ওই মহাসিন্ধুর ওপার থেকে কি সংগীত ভেসে আসে") (Act V, Scene ii)
8. "Sakal Byathar Byathi Ami Hoi, Tumi Hao Sab Sukher Bhagi" ("সকল ব্যথার ব্যথী আমি হই, তুমি হও সব সুখের ভাগী") (Act V, Scene iii)

According to Sukumar Bandyopadhyay, the songs of this play were highly successful as each of the song has some special significance regarding the story of the play.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **Adaptations**

The play was adapted into a Tamil film called *Mathru Bhoomi* (1939) directed by H. M. Reddy.



# Arthashastra

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthashastra>

Arthashastra	
	
Information	
Religion	<a href="#">Hinduism</a>
Author	<a href="#">Kautilya</a>
Language	<a href="#">Sanskrit</a>
Period	3rd century BCE – 3rd century CE
Full text	
 <a href="#">Arthashastra at English Wikisource</a>	

The [Arthashastra](#) ([Sanskrit](#): अर्थशास्त्रम्, [IAST](#): Arthaśāstram; transl. E economics) is an [Ancient Indian Sanskrit](#) treatise on statecraft, political science, economic policy and military strategy. [Chanakya](#), also identified as Vishnugupta and Kautilya, is traditionally credited as the author of the text.<sup>[4][5]</sup> Chanakya was a scholar at [Taxila](#), the teacher and guardian of [Mauryan](#) emperor [Chandragupta Maurya](#). Some scholars believe the three to be the same person, while a few have questioned this identification. The text is likely the work of several authors over centuries. Composed, expanded and redacted between the 2nd century BCE and 3rd century CE, the Arthashastra was influential until the 12th century, when it disappeared. It was rediscovered in 1905 by [R. Shamasastri](#), who published it in 1909. The first English translation, also by Shamasastri, was published in 1915.

The Sanskrit title, Arthashastra, can be translated as "political science" or "economic science" or simply "statecraft", as the word artha (अर्थ) is polysemous in Sanskrit; the word has a broad scope. It includes books on the nature of government, law, civil and criminal court

systems, ethics, economics, markets and trade, the methods for screening ministers, diplomacy, theories on war, nature of peace, and the duties and obligations of a king. The text incorporates Hindu philosophy, includes ancient economic and cultural details on agriculture, mineralogy, mining and metals, animal husbandry, medicine, forests and wildlife.

The *Arthashastra* explores issues of social welfare, the collective ethics that hold a society together, advising the king that in times and in areas devastated by famine, epidemic and such acts of nature, or by war, he should initiate public projects such as creating irrigation waterways and building forts around major strategic holdings and towns and exempt taxes on those affected. The text was influenced by Hindu texts such as the sections on kings, governance and legal procedures included in *Manusmriti*.

### History of the manuscripts

Rediscovered c. 16th century *Arthashastra* manuscript in Grantha script from the Oriental Research Institute (ORI) which was found in 1905

The text was considered lost by colonial era scholars, until a manuscript was discovered in 1905. A copy of the *Arthashastra* in Sanskrit, written on palm leaves, was presented by a Tamil Brahmin from Thanjavur to the newly opened Mysore Oriental Library headed by Benjamin Lewis Rice. The text was identified by the librarian Rudrapatna Shama Sastry as the *Arthashastra*. During 1905–1909, Shama Sastry published English translations of the text in installments, in journals Indian Antiquary and Mysore Review.

During 1923–1924, Julius Jolly and Richard Schmidt published a new edition of the text, which was based on a Malayalam script manuscript in the Bavarian State Library. In the 1950s, fragmented sections of a north Indian version of *Arthashastra* were discovered in form of a Devanagari manuscript in a Jain library in Patan, Gujarat. A new edition based on this manuscript was published by Muni Jina Vijay in 1959. In 1960, R. P. Kangle published a critical edition of the text, based on all the available manuscripts. Numerous translations and interpretations of the text have been published since then.

The text written in Sanskrit of the 1st millennium BCE Sanskrit, which is coded, dense and capable of many interpretations, especially as English and Sanskrit are very different languages, both grammatically and syntactically. Patrick Olivelle, whose translation was published in 2013 by Oxford University Press, said it was the "most difficult translation project

I have ever undertaken." Parts of the text are still opaque after a century of modern scholarship.

### **Authorship, date of writing, and structure**

The authorship and date of writing are unknown, and there is evidence that the surviving manuscripts are not original and have been modified in their history but were most likely completed in the available form between the 2nd century BCE and 3rd century CE Olivelle states that the surviving manuscripts of the Arthashastra are the product of a transmission that has involved at least three major overlapping divisions or layers, which together consist of 15 books, 150 chapters and 180 topics. The first chapter of the first book is an ancient table of contents, while the last chapter of the last book is a short 73 verse epilogue asserting that all thirty-two *Yukti*-elements of correct reasoning methods were deployed to create the text.

A notable structure of the treatise is that while all chapters are primarily prose, each transition into a poetic verse towards its end, as a marker, a style that is found in many ancient Hindu Sanskrit texts where the changing poetic meter or style of writing is used as a syntax code to silently signal that the chapter or section is ending. All 150 chapters of the text also end with a [colophon](#) stating the title of the book it belongs in, the topics contained in that book (like an index), the total number of titles in the book and the books in the text. Finally, the *Arthashastra* text numbers its 180 topics consecutively, and does not restart from one when a new chapter or a new book starts.

The division into 15, 150, and 180 of books, chapters and topics respectively was probably not accidental, states Olivelle, because ancient authors of major Hindu texts favor certain numbers, such as 18 [Parvas](#) in the epic Mahabharata. The largest book is the second, with 1,285 sentences, while the smallest is eleventh, with 56 sentences. The entire book has about 5,300 sentences on politics, governance, welfare, economics, protecting key officials and king, gathering intelligence about hostile states, forming strategic alliances, and conduct of war, exclusive of its table of contents and the last epilogue-style book.

### **Authorship**

Stylistic differences within some sections of the surviving manuscripts suggest that it likely includes the work of several authors over the centuries. There is no doubt, states Olivelle, that "revisions, errors, additions and perhaps even subtractions have occurred" in Arthashastra since its final redaction in 300 CE or earlier.

Three names for the text's author are used in various historical sources:

### **Kautilya or Kautalya**

The text identifies its author by the name "Kauṭilya" or its variant "Kauṭalya": both spellings appear in manuscripts, commentaries, and

references in other ancient texts; it is not certain which one of these is the original spelling of the author's name. This person was probably the author of the original recension of *Arthashastra*: this recension must have been based on works by earlier writers, as suggested by the *Arthashastra*'s opening verse, which states that its author consulted the so-called "Arthashastras" to compose a new treatise.

[Vishakhadatta](#)'s *Mudrarakshasa* refers to Kauṭilya as *kutila-mati* ("crafty-minded"), which has led to suggestions that the word "Kauṭilya" is derived from *kutila*, the Sanskrit word for "crafty". However, such a derivation is grammatically impossible, and Vishakhadatta's usage is simply a [pun](#). The word "Kauṭilya" or "Kauṭalya" appears to be the name of a [gotra](#) (lineage), and is used in this sense in the later literature and inscriptions.

### [Vishnugupta](#)

A verse at the end of the text identifies its author as "Vishnugupta" (*Viṣṇugupta*), stating that Vishnugupta himself composed both the text and its commentary, after noticing "many errors committed by commentators on treatises". R. P. Kangle theorized that Vishnugupta was the personal name of the author while Chanakya (*Cāṇakya*) was the name of his gotra. Others, such as [Thomas Burrow](#) and [Patrick Olivelle](#), point out that none of the earliest sources that refer to Chanakya mention the name "Vishnugupta". According to these scholars, "Vishnugupta" may have been the personal name of the author whose gotra name was "Kautilya": this person, however, was different from Chanakya. Historian K C Ojha theorizes that Vishnugupta was the redactor of the final recension of the text.

### [Chanakya](#)

The penultimate paragraph of the *Arthashastra* states that the treatise was authored by the person who rescued the country from the [Nanda kings](#), although it does not explicitly name this person. The [Maurya](#) prime minister [Chanakya](#) played a pivotal role in the overthrow of the Nanda dynasty. Several later texts identify Chanakya with Kautilya or Vishnugupta: Among the earliest sources, *Mudrarakshasa* is the only one that uses all three names - Kauṭilya, Vishnugupta, and Chanakya - to refer to the same person. Other early sources use the name Chanakya (e.g. [Panchatantra](#)), Vishnugupta (e.g. Kamandaka's [Nitisara](#)), both Chanakya and Vishnugupta ([Dandin's Dashakumaracharita](#)), or Kautilya (e.g. [Bana's Kadambari](#)). The [Puranas](#) ([Vishnu](#), [Vayu](#), and [Matsya](#)) are the only among the ancient texts that use the name "Kautilya" (instead of the more common "Chanakya") to describe the Maurya prime minister.

Scholars such as R. P. Kangle theorize that the text was authored by the Maurya prime minister Chanakya. Others, such as Olivelle and [Thomas Trautmann](#), argue that this verse is a later addition, and that the identification of Chanakya and Kautilya is a relatively later development that

occurred during the [Gupta period](#). Trautmann points out that none of the earlier sources that refer to Chanakya mention his authorship of the *Arthashastra*. Olivelle proposes that in an attempt to present the Guptas as the legitimate successors of the Mauryas, the author of political treatise followed by the Guptas was identified with the Maurya prime minister.

### **Chronology**

Olivelle states that the oldest layer of text, the "sources of the Kauṭilya", dates from the period 150 BCE–50 CE. The next phase of the work's evolution, the "Kauṭilya Recension", can be dated to the period 50–125 CE. Finally, the "Śāstric Redaction" (i.e., the text as we have it today) is dated period 175–300 CE.

The *Arthashastra* is mentioned and dozens of its verses have been found on fragments of manuscript treatises buried in ancient Buddhist monasteries of northwest China, Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan. This includes the [Spitzer Manuscript](#) (c. 200 CE) discovered near [Kizil](#) in China and the birch bark scrolls now a part of the Bajaur Collection (1st to 2nd century CE) discovered in the ruins of a [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa](#) Buddhist site in 1999, state [Harry Falk](#) and Ingo Strauch.

### **Geography**

The author of *Arthashastra* uses the term *gramakuta* to describe a village official or chief, which, according to [Thomas Burrow](#), suggests that he was a native of the region that encompasses present-day [Gujarat](#) and northern Maharashtra. Other evidences also support this theory: the text mentions that the shadow of a sundial disappears at noon during the month of [Ashadha](#) (June–July), and that the day and night are equal during the months of [Chaitra](#) (March–April) and [Ashvayuja](#) (September–October). This is possible only in the areas lying along the [Tropic of Cancer](#), which passes through central India, from [Gujarat](#) in the west to [Bengal](#) in the east.

The author of the text appears to be most familiar with the historical regions of [Avanti](#) and [Ashmaka](#), which included parts of present-day Gujarat and Maharashtra. He provides precise annual rainfall figures for these historical regions in the text. Plus, he shows familiarity with sea-trade, which can be explained by the existence of ancient sea ports such as [Sopara](#) in the Gujarat-Maharashtra region. Lastly, the gotra name Kauṭilya is still found in Maharashtra.

### **Translation of the title**

Different scholars have translated the word "arthashastra" in different ways.

- R.P. Kangle: "Artha is the sustenance or livelihood of men, and *Arthaśāstra* is the science of the means to Artha"<sup>[45]</sup> "science of politics";
- [A.L. Basham](#): a "treatise on polity"
- [D.D. Kosambi](#): "science of material gain"
- G.P. Singh: "science of polity"
- [Roger Boesche](#): "science of [political economy](#)"
- [Patrick Olivelle](#): "science of politics"

[Artha](#) (prosperity, wealth, purpose, meaning, economic security) is one of the four aims of human life in Hinduism ([Puruṣārtha](#)), the others being [dharma](#) (laws, duties, rights, virtues, right way of living), [kama](#) (pleasure, emotions, sex) and [moksha](#) (spiritual liberation). [Sāstra](#) is the Sanskrit word for "rules" or "science".

## [Organisation](#)

*Arthashastra* is divided into 15 book titles, 150 chapters and 180 topics, as follows:

1. [On the Subject of Training](#), 21 chapters, Topics 1-18
2. [On the Activities of Superintendents](#), 36 chapters, Topics 19-56 (largest book)
3. [On Justices](#), 20 chapters, Topics 57-75
4. [Eradication of Thorns](#), 13 chapters, Topics 76-88
5. [On Secret Conduct](#), 6 chapters, Topics 89-95
6. [Basis of the Circle](#), 2 chapters, Topics 96-97
7. [On the Sixfold Strategy](#), 18 chapters, Topics 98-126
8. [On the Subject of Calamities](#), 5 chapters, Topics 127-134
9. [Activity of a King preparing to March into Battle](#), 7 chapters, Topics 135-146
10. [On War](#), 6 chapters, Topics 147-159
11. [Conduct toward Confederacies](#), 1 chapter, Topics 160-161
12. [On the Weaker King](#), 5 chapters, Topics 162-170
13. [Means of Capturing a Fort](#), 5 chapters, Topics 171-176
14. [On Esoteric Practices](#), 4 chapters, Topics 177-179
15. [Organization of a Scientific Treatise](#), 1 chapter, Topic 180

## [Contents](#)

### **The need for law, economics and government**

The ancient Sanskrit text opens, in chapter 2 of Book 1 (the first chapter is table of contents), by acknowledging that there are a number of extant schools with different theories on proper and necessary number of fields of

knowledge, and asserts they all agree that the science of government is one of those fields. It lists the school of *Brihaspati*, the school of *Usanas*, the school of *Manu* and itself as the school of *Kautilya* as examples.

The school of *Usanas* asserts, states the text, that there is only one necessary knowledge, the science of government because no other science can start or survive without it. The school of *Brihaspati* asserts, according to Arthashastra, that there are only two fields of knowledge, the science of government and the science of economics (*Varta* of agriculture, cattle and trade) because all other sciences are intellectual and mere flowering of the temporal life of man. The school of *Manu* asserts, states Arthashastra, that there are three fields of knowledge, the [Vedas](#), the science of government and the science of economics (*Varta* of agriculture, cattle and trade) because these three support each other, and all other sciences are special branch of the Vedas.

The Arthashastra then posits its own theory that there are four necessary fields of knowledge, the [Vedas](#), the *Anvikshaki* (science of reasoning), the science of government and the science of economics (*Varta* of agriculture, cattle and trade). It is from these four that all other knowledge, wealth and human prosperity is derived. The Kautilya text thereafter asserts that it is the Vedas that discuss what is [Dharma](#) (right, moral, ethical) and what is [Adharma](#) (wrong, immoral, unethical), it is the *Varta* that explain what creates wealth and what destroys wealth, it is the science of government that illuminates what is *Nyaya* (justice, expedient, proper) and *Anyaya* (unjust, inexpedient, improper), and that it is *Anvishaki* (philosophy) that is the light of these sciences, as well as the source of all knowledge, the guide to virtues, and the means to all kinds of acts. He says of government in general:

Without government, rises disorder as in the *Matsya nyayamud bhavayati* (proverb on law of fishes). In the absence of governance, the strong will swallow the weak. In the presence of governance, the weak resists the strong. [59][60]

### **Raja (king)**

The best king is the *Raja-rishi*, the sage king.

The *Raja-rishi* has self-control and does not fall for the temptations of the senses, he learns continuously and cultivates his thoughts, he avoids false and flattering advisors and instead associates with the true and accomplished elders, he is genuinely promoting the security and welfare of his people, he enriches and empowers his people, he lives a simple life and avoids harmful people or activities, he keeps away from another's wife nor craves for other people's property. The greatest enemies of a king are not others, but are these six: lust, anger, greed, conceit, arrogance and foolhardiness. A just king gains the loyalty of his people not because he is king, but because he is just.

## **Officials, advisors and checks on government**

Book 1 and Book 2 of the text discusses how the crown prince should be trained and how the king himself should continue learning, selecting his key *Mantri* (ministers), officials, administration, staffing of the court personnel, magistrates and judges.

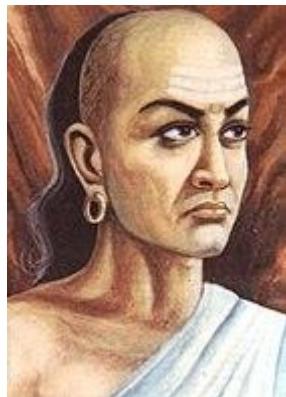
Topic 2 of the Arthashastra, or chapter 5 of Book 1, is dedicated to the continuous training and development of the king, where the text advises that he maintain a counsel of elders, from each field of various sciences, whose accomplishments he knows and respects. Topic 4 of the text describes the process of selecting the ministers and key officials, which it states must be based on king's personal knowledge of their honesty and capacity. Kautilya first lists various different opinions among extant scholars on how key government officials should be selected, with *Bharadvaja* suggesting honesty and knowledge be the screen for selection, *Kaunapadanta* suggesting that heredity be favored, *Visalaksha* suggesting that king should hire those whose weaknesses he can exploit, *Parasara* cautioning against hiring vulnerable people because they will try to find king's vulnerability to exploit him instead, and yet another who insists that experience and not theoretical qualification be primary selection criterion.

Kautilya, after describing the conflicting views on how to select officials, asserts that a king should select his *Amatyah* (ministers and high officials) based on the capacity to perform that they have shown in their past work, the character and their values that is accordance with the role. The *Amatyah*, states Arthashastra, must be those with following *Amatya-sampat*: well trained, with foresight, with strong memory, bold, well spoken, enthusiastic, excellence in their field of expertise, learned in theoretical and practical knowledge, pure of character, of good health, kind and philanthropic, free from procrastination, free from fickle-mindedness, free from hate, free from enmity, free from anger, and dedicated to [dharma](#). Those who lack one or a few of these characteristics must be considered for middle or lower positions in the administration, working under the supervision of more senior officials. The text describes tests to screen for the various *Amatya-sampat*.

The Arthashastra, in Topic 6, describes checks and continuous measurement, in secret, of the integrity and lack of integrity of all ministers and high officials in the kingdom. Those officials who lack integrity must be arrested. Those who are unrighteous, should not work in civil and criminal courts. Those who lack integrity in financial matters or fall for the lure of money must not be in revenue collection or treasury, states the text, and those who lack integrity in sexual relationships must not be appointed to *Vihara* services (pleasure grounds). The highest level ministers must have been tested and have successfully demonstrated integrity in all situations and all types of allurements.

Chapter 9 of Book 1 suggests that the king maintain a council and a *Purohit* (chaplain, spiritual guide) for his personal counsel. The *Purohit*, claims the text, must be one who is well educated in the [Vedas](#) and its six *Angas*.

### **Causes of impoverishment, lack of motivation and disaffection among people**



**Fanciful portrait of Chanakya illustrating  
Shamastry's 1915 translation of the Arthashastra.**

The Arthashastra, in Topic 109, Book 7 lists the causes of disaffection, lack of motivation and increase in economic distress among people. It opens by stating that wherever "good people are snubbed, and evil people are embraced" distress increases. Wherever officials or people initiate unprecedented violence in acts or words, wherever there is unrighteous acts of violence, disaffection grows. When the king rejects the [Dharma](#), that is "does what ought not to be done, does not do what ought to be done, does not give what ought to be given, and gives what ought not to be given", the king causes people to worry and dislike him.

Anywhere, states *Arthashastra* in verse 7.5.22, where people are fined or punished or harassed when they ought not to be harassed, where those that should be punished are not punished, where those people are apprehended when they ought not be, where those who are not apprehended when they ought to, the king and his officials cause distress and disaffection. When officials engage in thievery, instead of providing protection against robbers, the people are impoverished, they lose respect and become disaffected.

A state, asserts *Arthashastra* text in verses 7.5.24 - 7.5.25, where courageous activity is denigrated, quality of accomplishments are disparaged, pioneers are harmed, honorable men are dishonored, where deserving people are not rewarded but instead favoritism and falsehood is, that is where people lack motivation, are distressed, become upset and disloyal.

In verse 7.5.33, the ancient text remarks that general impoverishment relating to food and survival money destroys everything, while other types of impoverishment can be addressed with grants of grain and money.

### **Civil, criminal law and court system**

Book 3 of the Arthashastra, according to Trautmann, is dedicated to civil law, including sections relating to economic relations of employer and employee, partnerships, sellers and buyers. Book 4 is a treatise on criminal law, where the king or officials acting on his behalf, take the initiative and start the judicial process against acts of crime, because the crime is felt to be a wrong against the people of the state. This system, as Trautmann points out, is similar to European system of criminal law, rather than other historic legal system, because in the European (and Arthashastra) system it is the state that initiates judicial process in cases that fall under criminal statutes, while in the latter systems the aggrieved party initiates a claim in the case of murder, rape, bodily injury among others.

The ancient text stipulates that the courts have a panel of three *pradeshtri* (magistrates) for handling criminal cases, and this panel is different, separate and independent of the panel of judges of civil court system it specifies for a Hindu kingdom. The text lays out that just punishment is one that is in proportion to the crime in many sections starting with chapter 4 of Book 1, and repeatedly uses this principle in specifying punishments, for example in Topic 79, that is chapter 2 of Book 4. Economic crimes such as conspiracy by a group of traders or artisans is to be, states the Arthashastra, punished with much larger and punitive collective fine than those individually, as conspiracy causes systematic damage to the well-being of the people.

### **Marriage laws**

The text discusses marriage and consent laws in Books 3 and 4. It asserts, in chapter 4.2, that a girl may marry any man she wishes, three years after her first menstruation, provided that she does not take her parents' property or ornaments received by her before the marriage. However, if she marries a man her father arranges or approves of, she has the right to take the ornaments with her.

In chapter 3.4, the text gives the right to a woman that she may remarry anyone if she wants to, if she has been abandoned by the man she was betrothed to, if she does not hear back from him for three menstrual periods, or if she does hear back and has waited for seven menses.

The chapter 2 of Book 3 of Arthashastra legally recognizes eight types of marriage. The bride is given the maximum property inheritance rights when the parents select the groom and the girl consents to the selection (Brahma marriage), and minimal if bride and groom marry secretly as lovers (Gandharva marriage) without the approval of her father and her mother. However, in cases of Gandharva marriage (love), she is given more

rights than she has in Brahma marriage (arranged), if the husband uses the property she owns or has created, with husband required to repay her with interest when she demands.

### **Wildlife and forests**

Arthashastra states that forests be protected and recommends that the state treasury be used to feed animals such as horses and elephants that are too old for work, sick or injured. However, Kautilya also recommends that wildlife that is damaging crops should be restrained with state resources. In Topic 19, chapter 2, the text suggests:

**The king should grant exemption [from taxes] to a region devastated by an enemy king or tribe, to a region beleaguered by sickness or famine.**

**He should safeguard agriculture when it is stressed by the hardships of fines, forced labor, taxes, and animal herds when they are harassed by thieves, vicious animals, poison, crocodiles or sickness  
He should keep trade routes [roads] clear when they are oppressed by anyone, including his officers, robbers or frontier commanders when they are worn out by farm animals**

**The king should protect produce, forests, elephants forests, reservoirs and mines established in the past and also set up new ones.**

In topic 35, the text recommends that the "Superintendent of Forest Produce" appointed by the state for each forest zone be responsible for maintaining the health of the forest, protecting forests to assist wildlife such as elephants (*hastivana*), but also producing forest products to satisfy economic needs, products such as Teak, Palmyra, Mimosa, Sissu, Kauki, Sirisha, Catechu, Latifolia, Arjuna, Tilaka, Tinisa, Sal, Robesta, Pinus, Somavalka, Dhava, Birch, bamboo, hemp, Balbaja (used for ropes), Munja, fodder, firewood, bulbous roots and fruits for medicine, flowers. The *Arthashastra* also reveals that the Mauryas designated specific forests to protect supplies of timber, as well as lions and tigers, for skins.

### **Mines, factories and superintendents**

The Arthashastra dedicates Topics 30 through 47 discussing the role of government in setting up mines and factories, gold and precious stone workshops, commodities, forest produce, armory, standards for balances and weight measures, standards for length and time measures, customs, agriculture, liquor, abattoirs and courtesans, shipping, domesticated animals such as cattle, horses and elephants along with animal welfare when they are injured or too old, pasture land, military preparedness and intelligence gathering operations of the state.

## **On spying, propaganda and information**

The Arthashastra dedicates many chapters on the need, methods and goals of secret service, and how to build then use a network of spies that work for the state. The spies should be trained to adopt roles and guises, to use coded language to transmit information, and be rewarded by their performance and the results they achieve, states the text.

The roles and guises recommended for *Vyanjana* (appearance) agents by the Arthashastra include ascetics, forest hermits, mendicants, cooks, merchants, doctors, astrologers, householders, entertainers, dancers, female agents and others. It suggests that members from these professions should be sought to serve for the secret service. A prudent state, states the text, must expect that its enemies seek information and are spying inside its territory and spreading propaganda, and therefore it must train and reward double agents to gain identity about such hostile intelligence operations.

The goals of the secret service, in Arthashastra, was to test the integrity of government officials, spy on cartels and population for conspiracy, to monitor hostile kingdoms suspected of preparing for war or in war against the state, to check spying and propaganda wars by hostile states, to destabilize enemy states, to get rid of troublesome powerful people who could not be challenged openly. The spy operations and its targets, states verse 5.2.69 of Arthashastra, should be pursued "with respect to traitors and unrighteous people, not with respect to others".

## **On war and peace**

The Arthashastra dedicates Book 7 and 10 to war, and considers numerous scenarios and reasons for war. It classifies war into three broad types – open war, covert war and silent war. It then dedicates chapters to defining each type of war, how to engage in these wars and how to detect that one is a target of covert or silent types of war. The text cautions that the king should know the progress he expects to make, when considering the choice between waging war and pursuing peace. The text asserts:

When the degree of progress is the same in pursuing peace and waging war, peace is to be preferred. For, in war, there are disadvantages such as losses, expenses and absence from home.

Kautilya, in the Arthashastra, suggests that the state must always be adequately fortified, its armed forces prepared and resourced to defend itself against acts of war. Kautilya favors peace over war, because he asserts that in most situations, peace is more conducive to creation of wealth, prosperity and security of the people. Arthashastra defines the value of peace and the term peace, states Brekke, as "effort to achieve the results of work undertaken is industry, and absence of disturbance to the enjoyment of the results achieved from work is peace".

All means to win a war are appropriate in the Arthashastra, including assassination of enemy leaders, sowing discord in its leadership, engagement of covert men and women in the pursuit of military objectives and as weapons of war, deployment of accepted superstitions and propaganda to bolster one's own troops or to demoralize enemy soldiers, as well as open hostilities by deploying kingdom's armed forces. After success in a war by the victorious just and noble state, the text argues for humane treatment of conquered soldiers and subjects.

The Arthashastra theories are similar with some and in contrast to other alternative theories on war and peace in the ancient Indian tradition. For example, states Brekke, the legends in Hindu epics preach heroism qua heroism which is in contrast to Kautilya suggestion of prudence and never forgetting the [four Hindu goals of human life](#), while Kamandaki's *Nitisara*, which is similar to Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, is among other Hindu classics on statecraft and foreign policy that suggest prudence, engagement and diplomacy, peace is preferable and must be sought, and yet prepared to excel and win war if one is forced to.

### **Foreign Policy**

In the Arthashastra, Books 7, 11 and 12 have given a comprehensive analysis on all aspects of the relations between states. In the first chapter of Book 6, the theoretical basis of foreign policy is described. This includes six-fold foreign policy and the Mandala Theory of foreign policy.

### **On regulations and taxes**

The Arthashastra discusses a mixed economy, where private enterprise and state enterprise frequently competed side by side, in agriculture, animal husbandry, forest produce, mining, manufacturing and trade. However, royal statutes and officials regulated private economic activities, some economic activity was the monopoly of the state, and a superintendent oversaw that both private and state owned enterprises followed the same regulations. The private enterprises were taxed. Mines were state owned, but leased to private parties for operations, according to chapter 2.12 of the text. The Arthashastra states that protecting the consumer must be an important priority for the officials of the kingdom.

Arthashastra stipulates restraint on taxes imposed, fairness, the amounts and how tax increases should be implemented. Further, the text suggests that the tax should be "convenient to pay, easy to calculate, inexpensive to administer, equitable and non-distortive, and not inhibit growth. Fair taxes build popular support for the king, states the text, and some manufacturers and artisans, such as those of textiles, were subject to a flat tax. The Arthashastra states that taxes should only be collected from ripened economic activity, and should not be collected from early, unripe stages of economic activity. Historian of economic thought [Joseph Spengler](#) notes:

Kautilya's discussion of taxation and expenditure gave expression to three Indian principles: taxing power [of state] is limited; taxation should not be felt to be heavy or exclusive [discriminatory]; tax increases should be graduated.

Agriculture on privately owned land was taxed at the rate of 16.67%, but the tax was exempted in cases of famine, epidemic, and settlement into new pastures previously uncultivated and if damaged during a war. New public projects such as irrigation and water works were exempt from taxes for five years, and major renovations to ruined or abandoned water works were granted tax exemption for four years. Temple and *gurukul* lands were exempt from taxes, fines or penalties. Trade into and outside the kingdom's borders was subject to toll fees or duties. Taxes varied between 10% and 25% on industrialists and businessmen, and it could be paid in kind (produce), through labor, or in cash.

### **Pregnancy and Abortion**

In general, causing an abortion had varying penalties. There was severe punishment for aborting a slave woman. For a woman convicted of murder, the sentence of drowning was executed a month after child birth. Pregnant women were also given free ferry rides.

### **Translations and scholarship**

The text has been translated and interpreted by Shamashastry, Kangle, Trautmann and many others. Recent translations or interpretations include those of [Patrick Olivelle](#) and McClish.

### **Influence and reception**



### **Maurya Empire in Kautilya's time**

Scholars state that the Arthashastra was influential in Asian history. Its ideas helped create one of the largest empires in South Asia, stretching from the borders of [Persia](#) to Bengal on the other side of the Indian subcontinent, with its capital [Pataliputra](#) twice as large as Rome under Emperor [Marcus Aurelius](#).

Kautilya's patron [Chandragupta Maurya](#) consolidated an empire which was inherited by his son Bindusara and then his grandson [Ashoka](#). With the progressive secularization of society, and with the governance-related innovations contemplated by the *Arthashastra*, India was "prepared for the reception of the great moral transformation ushered in by Ashoka", and the spread of Buddhist, Hindu and other ideas across South Asia, East Asia and southeast Asia.

### **Comparisons to Machiavelli**

In 1919, a few years after the newly discovered *Arthashastra* manuscript's translation was first published, [Max Weber](#) stated:

Truly radical "Machiavellianism", in the popular sense of that word, is classically expressed in Indian literature in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya (written long before the birth of Christ, ostensibly in the time of Chandragupta): compared to it, Machiavelli's *The Prince* is harmless.

More recent scholarship has disagreed with the characterization of *Arthashastra* as "Machiavellianism". Kautilya asserts in *Arthashastra* that, "the ultimate source of the prosperity of the kingdom is its security and prosperity of its people", a view never mentioned in Machiavelli's text. The text advocates land reform, where land is taken from landowners and farmers who own land but do not grow anything for a long time, and given to poorer farmers who want to grow crops but do not own any land.

*Arthashastra* declares, in numerous occasions, the need for empowering the weak and poor in one's kingdom, a sentiment that is not found in Machiavelli. "The king shall also provide subsistence to helpless women when they are carrying and also to the children they give birth to". Elsewhere, the text values not just powerless human life, but even animal life and suggests in Book 2 that horses and elephants be given food, when they become incapacitated from old age, disease or after war.

### **Views on the role of the state**

[Roger Boesche](#), who relied entirely on the 1969 translation by Kangle for his analysis of *Arthashastra*, and who criticized an alternative 1992 translation by Rangarajan, has called the *Arthashastra* as "a great political book of the ancient world". He interprets that the 1st millennium BCE text is grounded more like the Soviet Union and China where the state envisions itself as driven by the welfare of the common good, but operates an extensive spy state and system of surveillance. This view has been challenged by Thomas Trautmann, who asserts that a free market and individual rights, albeit a regulated system, are proposed by *Arthashastra*. Boesche is not summarily critical and adds:

Kautilya's Arthashastra depicts a bureaucratic welfare state, in fact some kind of socialized monarchy, in which the central government administers the details of the economy for the common good...In addition, Kautilya offers a work of genius in matters of foreign policy and welfare, including key principles of international relations from a realist perspective and a discussion of when an army must use cruel violence and when it is more advantageous to be humane.

Scholars disagree on how to interpret the document. Kumud Mookerji states that the text may be a picture of actual conditions in Kautilya's times. However, Bhargava states that given Kautilya was the prime minister, one must expect that he implemented the ideas in the book.

### **Views on property and markets**

Thomas Trautmann states that the *Arthashastra* in chapter 3.9 recognizes the concept of land ownership rights and other private property, and requires the king to protect that right from seizure or abuse. There is no question, according to Trautmann, that people had the power to buy and sell land. However, Trautmann adds, this does not mean that Kautilya was advocating a capitalistic free market economy. Kautilya requires that the land sale be staggered and grants certain buyers automatic "[call rights](#)". The *Arthashastra* states that if someone wants to sell land, the owner's kins, neighbors and creditors have first right of purchase in that order, and only if they do not wish to buy the land for a fair competitive price, others and strangers can bid to buy. Further, the price must be announced in front of witnesses, recorded and taxes paid, for the buy-sale arrangement to be deemed recognized by the state. The "call rights" and staggered bid buying is not truly a free market, as Trautmann points out.

The text dedicates Book 3 and 4 to economic laws and a court system to oversee and resolve economic, contracts and market-related disputes. The text also provides a system of appeal in which three *dharmastha* (judges) consider contractual disputes between two parties, and considers profiteering and false claims to dupe customers a crime. The text, states Trautmann, thus anticipates market exchange and provides a framework for its functioning.

### **Book on strategy anticipating all scenarios**

More recent scholarship presents a more nuanced reception for the text.

The text, states Sihag, is a treatise on how a state should pursue economic development and it emphasized "proper measurement of economic performance", and "the role of ethics, considering ethical values as the glue which binds society and promotes economic development".

### **Realism**

India's former [National Security Adviser](#), [Shiv Shankar Menon](#), states: "Arthashastra is a serious manual on statecraft, on how to run a state,

informed by a higher purpose, clear and precise in its prescriptions, the result of practical experience of running a state. It is not just a normative text but a realist description of the art of running a state". The text is useful, according to Menon, because in many ways "the world we face today is similar to the world that Kautilya operated in". He recommended reading of the book for broadening the vision on strategic issues.



### **Avoid War**

One can lose a war as easily as one can win.

War is inherently unpredictable.

War is also expensive. Avoid war.

Try Upaya (four strategies).

Then Sadguna (six forms of non-war pressure).

Understand the opponent and seek to outwit him.

When everything fails, resort to military force.

**<< Arthashastra Books 2.10, 6-7, 10**

सुखस्य मूलं धर्मः । धर्मस्य मूलं अर्थः । अर्थस्य मूलं राज्यं । राज्यस्य मूलं इन्द्रिय जयः ।  
इन्द्रियाजयस्य मूलं विनयः । विनयस्य मूलं वृद्धोपसेवा॥

The root of happiness is Dharma (ethics, righteousness), the root of Dharma is Artha (economy, polity), the root of Artha is right governance, the root of right governance is victorious inner-restraint, the root of victorious inner-restraint is humility, the root of humility is serving the aged.

**<< Kautilya, Chanakya Sutra 1-6**

### **Crime and punishment**

**It** is power and power alone which, only when exercised by the king with impartiality and in proportion to guilt either over his son or his enemy, maintains both this world and the next.

**The** just and victorious king administers justice in accordance with Dharma (established law), Sanstha (customary law), Nyaya (edicts, announced law) and Vyavahara (evidence, conduct).

**<< Arthashastra 3.1**

### **Femme fatale as a secret agent**

To undermine a ruling oligarchy, make chiefs of the [enemy's] ruling council infatuated with women possessed of great beauty and youth. When passion is

roused in them, they should start quarrels by creating belief (about their love) in one and by going to another.

<< Arthashastra 11.1

### Behaviour of a Weak King

One should neither submit spinelessly nor sacrifice oneself in foolhardy valour. It is better to adopt such policies as would enable one to survive and live to fight another day.

>> Arthashastra 7.15.13-20, 12.1.1-9

### Tax collection and ripe fruits

As one plucks one ripe fruit after another from a garden, so should the king from his kingdom. Out of fear for his own destruction, he should avoid unripe ones, which give rise to revolts.

<< Stocking the Treasury, Arthashastra 5.2.70

### On abortion

When a person causes abortion in pregnancy by striking, or with medicine, or by annoyance, the highest, middlemost, and first amercements shall be imposed respectively.

<< Arthashastra 4.11.6

### Arthashastra and state

We should never forget that the Arthashastra means by the "state" an order of society which is not created by the king or the people, but which they exist to secure. These authors regarded the "state" - if that word might be used here - as essentially a beneficial institution for protection of human life and welfare and for the better realization of the ideals of humanity.

<< Jan Gonda

## Books and Academia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya#Books\\_and\\_academia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chanakya#Books_and_academia)

- An English-language book titled *Chanakya on Management* contains 216 sutras on *raja-neeti*, each of which has been translated and commented upon.

- A book written by [Ratan Lal Basu](#) and Rajkumar Sen deals with the economic concepts mentioned in *Arthashastra* and their relevance for the modern world.
- *Chanakya* (2001) by B. K. Chaturvedi
- In 2009, many eminent experts discussed the various aspects of Kauṭilya's thought in an International Conference held at the Oriental Research Institute in [Mysore](#) (India) to celebrate the centenary of discovery of the manuscript of the *Arthashastra* by [R. Shamasastri](#). Most of the papers presented in the Conference have been compiled in an edited volume by Raj Kumar Sen and [Ratan Lal Basu](#).
- *Chanakya's Chant* by [Ashwin Sanghi](#) is a fictional account of Chanakya's life as a political strategist in ancient India. The novel relates two parallel stories, the first of Chanakya and his machinations to bring Chandragupta Maurya to the throne of [Magadha](#); the second, that of a modern-day character called Gangasagar Mishra who makes it his ambition to position a slum child as [Prime Minister of India](#).
- *The Emperor's Riddles* by Satyarth Nayak features popular episodes from Chanakya's life.
- Kauṭilya's role in the formation of the Maurya Empire is the essence of a historical/spiritual novel *Courtesan and the Sadhu* by Mysore N. Prakash.
- Chanakya's contribution to the cultural heritage of Bharat (in Kannada) by [Shatavadhani Ganesh](#) with the title Bharatada Samskrutige Chanakyana Kodugegalu.
- *Pavan Choudary* (2 February 2009). *Chanakya's Political Wisdom*. *Wisdom Village Publications Division*. [ISBN 978-81-906555-0-7](#)., a political commentary on Chanakya
- *Sihag, Balbir Singh* (2014), *Kautilya: The True Founder of Economics*, *Vitasta Publishing Pvt.Ltd*, [ISBN 978-81-925354-9-4](#)
- Radhakrishnan Pillai has written a number of books related to Chanakya — "Chanakya in the Classroom: Life Lessons for Students", "Chanakya Neeti: Strategies for Success", "Chanakya in You", "Chanakya and the Art of War", "Corporate Chanakya", "Corporate Chanakya on Management" and "Corporate Chanakya on Leadership".

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## CHRONOLOGY

[https://www.worldhistory.org/timeline/Kautilya/#:~:text=Chanakya%20\(%20c.%20350%2D275%20BCE,\(322%2D185%20BCE\).](https://www.worldhistory.org/timeline/Kautilya/#:~:text=Chanakya%20(%20c.%20350%2D275%20BCE,(322%2D185%20BCE).)

- c. 350 BCE - 275 BCE

Life of Kautilya, Indian statesman and philosopher, chief advisor and Prime Minister of the Indian Emperor Chandragupta.

- 340 BCE - 298 BCE

Life of Indian Emperor Chandragupta, first ruler of the Mauryan Empire.

- c. 321 BCE - c. 298 BCE

Reign of Chandragupta Maurya, first ruler of the Mauryan Empire.

- 305 BCE

Emperor Chandragupta signs a treaty with Seleucus I, establishing borders and giving the Punjab to Chandragupta in return for 500 war elephants.

- 298 BCE

Chandragupta voluntarily abdicates the throne in favour of his son Bindusara. Jain sources say that Chandragupta turned into an ascetic and follower of Jainism, migrated south and starved himself to death.

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## Mauryan Empire

<https://www.thedispatch.in/governance-economy-society-and-art-under-mauryan-empire/>



## **Megasthenese speaks of Mauryan society as comprising seven castes-philosophers, farmers, soldiers, herdsmen, artisans, magistrates and councillors.**

One of the strongest and largest in the world, the Mauryan empire was the first pan India power to cover much of today's South Asia. A geographically extensive Iron Age historical power in South Asia based in Magadha, the Maurya empire was founded by Chandragupta Maurya in 322 BCE, it existed in some or the other form until 185 BCE. The empire was centralized by the conquest of the Indo-Gangetic Plain; its capital city was located at Pataliputra, today's. Outside this imperial center, the empire's geographical extent was dependent on the loyalty of military commanders who controlled the armed cities scattered within it. During Ashoka's rule (ca. 268–232 BCE) the empire briefly controlled the major urban hubs and arteries of the Indian subcontinent excepting the deep south. It declined for about 50 years after Ashoka's rule and dissolved in 185 BCE with the assassination of Brihadratha by Pushyamitra Shunga and foundation of the Shunga dynasty in Magadha.

Chandragupta Maurya raised an army, with the assistance of Chanakya, author of the Arthashastra, and overthrew the Nanda Empire in c. 322 BCE. Chandragupta rapidly expanded his power westwards across central and western India by conquering the satraps left by Alexander the Great, and by 317 BCE the empire had fully occupied northwestern India. The Mauryan Empire then defeated Seleucus I, a Diadochi and founder of the Seleucid Empire, during the Seleucid–Mauryan war, thus acquiring territory west of the Indus River.

### **Urban Governance under Mauryan Empire**

A number of cities such as Pataliputra, Taxila, Ujjain, Tosali, Suvarnagiri, Samapa, Isila and Kausambi are mentioned in the edicts of Ashoka. The Arthashastra has a full chapter on the administration of cities. Megasthenese has described in detail the administration of Pataliputra and it can be safely presumed that similar administration system was followed in most of the Mauryan cities. Megasthenese described that the city of Pataliputra was administered by a city council comprising 30 members. These 30 members were divided into a board of five members each. Each of these boards had specific responsibilities towards the administration of city. The first board was concerned with the industrial and artistic produce. Its duties included fixing of wages, check the adulteration etc. The second board dealt with the affairs of the visitors especially outsiders who came to Pataliputra. The third board was concerned with the registration of birth and death.



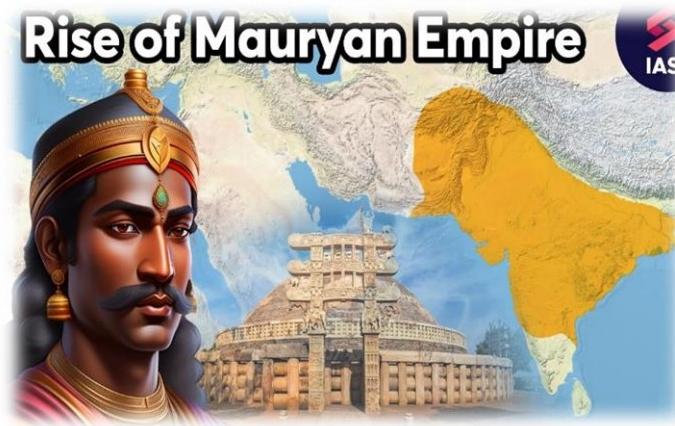
The fourth board regulated trade and commerce kept a vigil on the manufactured goods and sales of commodities. The fifth board was responsible for the supervision of manufacture of goods. The sixth board collected taxes as per the value of sold goods. The tax was normally 1/10th of the sold goods.

The city council appointed officers

who looked after the public welfare such as maintenance and repairs of roads, markets, hospitals, temples, educational institutions, sanitation, water supplies etc. The officer in charge of the city was known as Nagarka. The administrative machinery of the Mauryan state was fairly developed and well organized. Numerous depts regulated and controlled the activities of the state. Several important depts that Kautilya mentions are accounts, revenue, mines and minerals, chariots, customs and taxation.

### **Economy under Mauryan Empire**

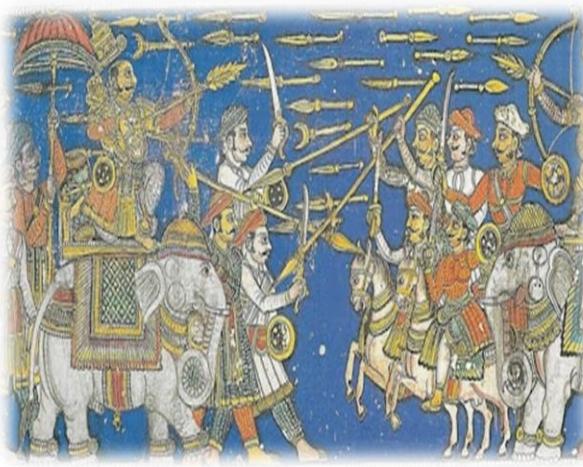
The Mauryan state concerned machinery which governed vast areas directly and to enforce the rules and regulations in respect of agriculture, industry, commerce, animal husbandry etc. The measures taken by the Maurya state for the promotion of the economy gave great impetus to economic development during the period. The vastness of India's agricultural and mineral resources and the extraordinary skill of her craftsmen have been mentioned by Megasthenes and other Greek writers. The large part of the population was agriculturists and lived in villages. New areas were brought under cultivation after cleaning the forest. People were encouraged to settle down in new areas. Chief of the guild was called jesthaka. The guilds settled the disputes of their members. A few guilds issued their own coins.



Among the crops rice of different varieties, coarse grains, sesame, pepper, pulses, wheat, linseed, mustard, vegetable and fruits of various kinds and sugarcane were grown. The state also owned agricultural farms, cattle farms and dairy farms etc.

Irrigation was given due importance. Water reservoirs and dams were built and water for irrigation was distributed. The famous inscription of Rudradaman found at Junagarh mention that one of Chandragupta's governors, Pushyagupta was responsible for building a dam on Sudarshana

Lake near Girnar in Kathiawad. From an inscription of Skandagupta it has been known that this dam was repaired during his reign almost 800 years after it was built. Industry was organized in various guilds.



The chief industries were textile, mining and metallurgy, ship building, jewellery making, metal working etc. The trade was regulated by the state. India supplied to other states indigo, cotton and silk and medicinal items. Provisions of warehouses, godowns and transport arrangements were also made. Foreign trade was carried on by land as well as

by sea. Special arrangements were made for the protection of trade routes. The state controlled and regulated the weights and measures. The artisans and craftsmen were specially protected by the state and offences against them were severely punished. The guilds were powerful institutions. It gave craftsmen great economic, political and judicial powers and protection.

The Sanchi Stupa inscription mentions that one of the carved gateways was donated by the guilds of ivory workers. Similarly the Nasik cave inscription mentions that two weaver's guilds gave permanent endowments for the maintenance of a temple. Kautilya says a full treasury is a guarantee of the prosperity of the state and it is the most important duty of the king to keep the treasury full at all the times for all works. During the Mauryan period taxes were levied both in cash and in kind and were collected by local officers. The chief source of revenue was land tax and tax levied on trade etc. The land tax was 1/4th to 1/6th of the produce. Toll tax was levied on all times which were brought for sale in the market. Tax was also levied on the manufactured goods. Those who could not pay the tax in cash or kind were to contribute their dues in the form of labor. Strabo mentions that craftsmen, herdsmen, traders, farmers all paid taxes. The Arthashastra describes revenues at great length. This was further augmented by income from mines, forests, pasture lands, trade and forts etc. Brahmins, children and handicapped people were exempted from paying taxes. Also, no tax was levied in areas where new trade routes or new irrigation projects or new agricultural land were being developed. Tax evasion was considered a very serious crime and offenders were severely punished.

### **Mauryan Society and Culture**

Megasthenes speaks of Mauryan society as comprising seven castes- philosophers, farmers, soldiers, herdsmen, artisans, magistrates and councillors. He could not properly comprehend the Indian society and failed

to distinguish between jati, Varna and the occupation. The chaturvana system continued to govern society. But the craftsmen irrespective of jati enjoyed a high place in the society. The material growth mellowed the jati restrictions and gave people prosperity and respectability. The urban way of life developed. The residential accommodation and its wealth etc were entered into official records and rules and regulation were well defined and strictly implemented. The education is fairly wide spread. Teaching continued to be the main job of the Brahmans. But Buddhist monasteries also acted as educational institutions. Taxila, Ujjayini and Varanasi were famous educational institutions. The technical education was generally provided through guilds, where pupils learnt the crafts from the early age. In the domestic life the joint family system was the norm. A married woman had her own property in the form of bride gift and jewels.



These were at her disposal in case of widowhood. The widows had a very honourable place in society. There are frequent references to women enjoying freedom and engaged in many occupations. Offences against women were severely dealt with. Kautilya laid down penalties against officials in charge of workshops and prisons who misbehaved with women. Megasthenese have stated that slavery did not exist in India. However forced labour and bonded labour did exist on a limited scale but were not treated so harshly as the slaves in the western world. About one and half century of Mauryan rule witnessed the growth of economy, art and architecture, education.

### **Art and Architecture in Maurya Empire**

During the Mauryan period there was a great development in the field of art and architecture. The main examples of the Mauryan art and architecture that survived are

- **Ashokan pillars and capitals.**
- **Remains of the royal palace and the city of Pataliputra**
- **Rock-cut Chaitya caves in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills**
- **Individual Mauryan sculptures and terracotta figurines**

The famous city of Pataliputra was described in detail by Megasthenese, references of which are found in the writings of Strabo, Arian and other Greek writers. It stretched along the river Ganga. It was enclosed by a wooden wall and had 64 gates. Excavations have brought to light remains of palaces and the wooden palisade.

The Mauryan wooden palace survived for about 700 years because at the end of the 4th century AD when Fa Hien saw, it was astounding. The palace

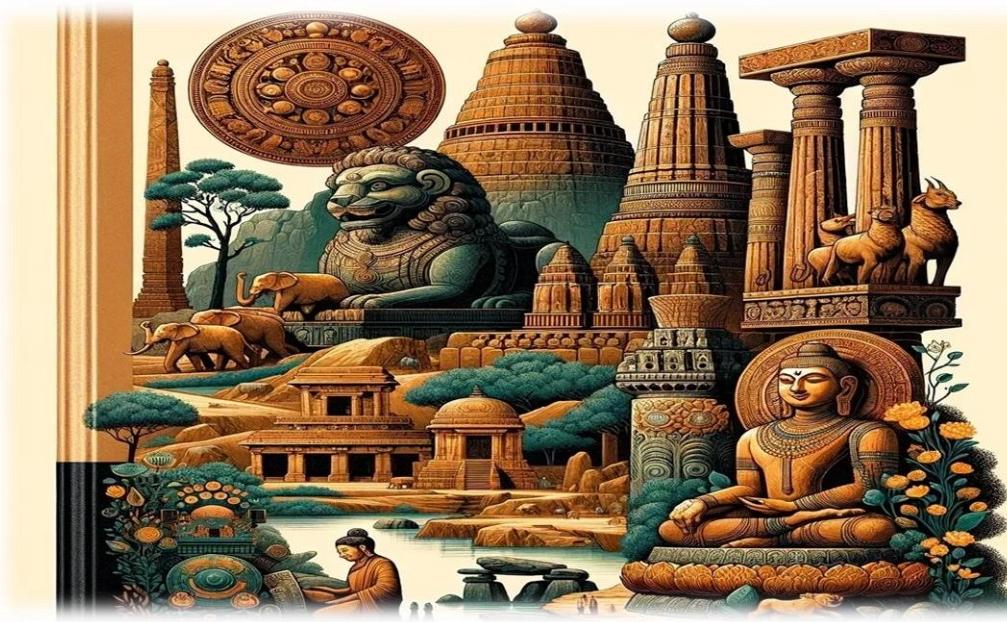
and also the wooden palisade seem to have been destroyed by fire. The burnt wooden structure and ashes have been found from Kumrahar. Seven rock-cut caves in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills show that the tradition of rock-cut caves in India began with the Mauryas. These caves were caused to be excavated by Ashoka and his grandson Dasaratha for the abode of Ajivikamonsks

The most extraordinary object of Mauryan period was monolithic stone pillars of up to 15m height with a capital. The pillars comprise two parts a shaft tapering from the base with a diameter from about 90 cm to 125 cm. These pillars had a capital at the top which was adorned with animal figurines. The main animal figurines were lions, horses, bulls and elephants. The pillars and the capitals were made of sandstone near Chunar in Mirzapur dist. They were all polished which gave them a shine. Some Yaksha and Yakshini figures have been found from Mathura, Pawaya and Patna. They are large sized statues representing folk art of the period.

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# Mauryan Art and Architecture

<https://aspirantias.com/daily-current-affairs/f/mauryan-art-and-architecture-a-glimpse-into-ancient-india-upsc>



## Introduction

- Emergence of Jainism and Buddhism: Circa 6th century BCE.
  - Mauryan Empire: Established in the 4th century BCE; extensive control by the 3rd century.

- Religious Landscape: Diverse practices including Yaksha worship; Buddhism gained prominence.
- Post-Harappan Art: Significant development of stone sculpture and architecture during the Mauryan period, marked by stupas, pillars, and rock-cut structures.

## Mauryan Pillars and Sculptures

- Influences: Similarities and differences with Achamenian Empire's pillars.
- Mauryan Techniques: Rock-cut, polished stone, distinct motifs like the lotus.
- Distribution and Purpose: Widespread across the empire, featuring proclamations and Buddha's teachings.
- Capitals: Animal figures like lions, bulls, elephants atop square or circular abacuses.
- Notable Examples: Lion Capital at Sarnath; pillars at Basarah-Bakhira, Rampurva, Sankisa, Lauriya-Nandangarh.
- Yaksha/Yakshini Figures: Indicative of the prevalent Yaksha worship.

## Rock-cut Architecture

- Patronage by Ashoka: Emphasis on rock-cut structures.
- Notable Creations: Rock-cut elephant at Dhauli; Lomus Rishi Cave at Barabar Hills.

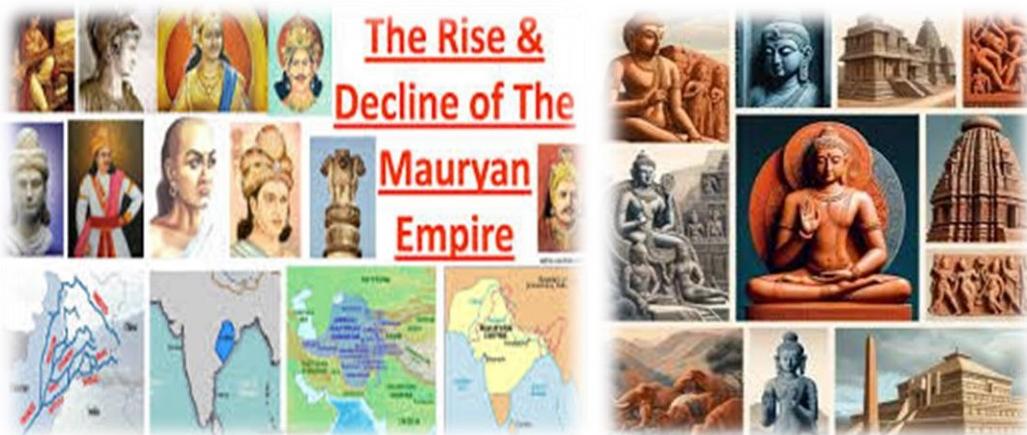
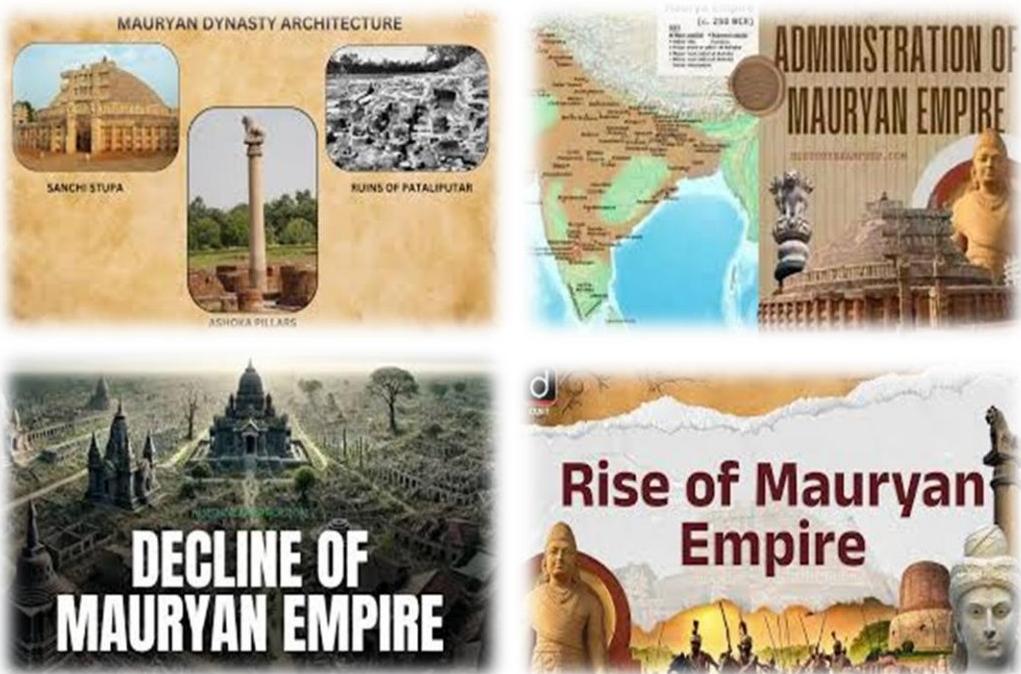
## Stupas, Chaityas, and Viharas

- Association: Primarily with Buddhism and some links to Jainism and Brahmanical gods.
- Stupa Construction: Over Buddha's relics; anda, harmika, chhatra features; circumambulatory paths and gateways.
- Example: Stupa at Bairat, Rajasthan; Sanchi Stupa.
- Chaityas: Prayer halls with distinctive architectural features.
- Viharas: Monastic residences, initially in wood, later in stone.

## Depiction of Buddha

- Early Period: Symbolic representation (footprints, lotus thrones, chakras, stupas).
- Later Period: Narrative art featuring Jataka tales on railings and toranas.
- Key Life Events: Birth, renunciation, enlightenment, first sermon, mahaparinirvana.
- Prominent Jataka Tales: Chhadanta, Sibi, Ruru, Vessantara, Vidur, Shama.

In summary, Mauryan art and architecture reflect a rich tapestry of cultural and religious narratives, showcasing advanced techniques and a deep understanding of aesthetics. This period marked a significant chapter in the history of Indian art, leaving behind a legacy that continues to be admired and studied.



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